Immortality of the Soul.—A Review.

I have in my possession a sixteen page tract from the pen of Elder J. H. Swihart, entitled 'The Immortality of the Soul or Death and the Resurrection, the object of which appears to be to lower man in the scale of creation to the materialistic standard of the lower orders. I knew of the intended publication of the tract, and after an ineffectual attempt to secure its withholdence from the public promised both the author and others, as critical and analytical review as the production should demand and it would be in my power to give. After giving the tract a careful reading and estimating its value as a document of sound doctrinal theology, I have decided to pass it by with this brief notice for the following reasons:

1. The author concedes the ultimate salvation of those who believe and obey the gospel though they reject his view of the material nature of the soul and hold to an expressed belief in its immortality. He is forced to this admission from the very nature of the case. He retains his membership in a church the great body of which holds to the pleasing doctrine of the endless nature of man's existence because he is the offspring of God (Acts 17: 29) and therefore necessarily partakes of the endless nature of his divine parent. He not only holds his membership among this people, but preaches for them, fellowships them, communes with them, and in every sense feels toward them and treats them as fellow Christians and as co-laborers in Christ. He is an effectual evangelist of the church, and as one of the results of his labors has seen many baptized into its fold. These he considers in all essential particulars thoroughly converted to Christ, and if they remain faithful, heirs of eternal life. It is safe to say not one of them was convicted of sin and converted to Christ by any word he ever said, or any sermon he ever preached against the soul's immortality, and not one in twenty of them believes today on that subject as he does. If then, all the effective work the author has done for Christ, in the way of the conversion of souls, has been through preaching on other subjects, and if, as a minister of the gospel his chief desire is for the salvation of others, it appears to me he should have selected the one theme he has found by experience to be the most effective in arousing a hatred of sin and inspiring men to flee the wrath to come and written on that with all the power and inspiration he possessed. I here would have seen some reasonable excuse for the publication of a tract of such character. It would have received the endorsement and support of all God-fearing men in the church, and might have resulted in the conversion of many souls. As it is we have time, labor, and money, spent in obtruding upon the attention of the church a tract, which at the very best will result in little else than strife and discord, and that, too, on a subject that has not the least element of practical benefit in it when the proselyte is made.

2. The terms used in the tract as explanatory of the words soul and spirit are a distortion of the Bible meaning of the terms, and renders the Divine record so nonsensical and absurd in many of its statements that one can scarcely think of an extended and serious reply. On page 1, the author places in brackets the word 'life' as expressing the full, round meaning embodied in the biblical term 'soul.' This word 'life' he uses throughout the tract (in brackets) to explain, and keep before the mind of the reader the ponderous fact that soul is life and life is soul, no more and no less. Also on page 1, he defines breath by the word spirit. Then spirit means breath and breath means spirit, and this definition of spirit runs throughout the teachings of the tract, except where the author stops when it suits his convenience best to define (spirit) as 'life principle' or 'spirit of life.'

On page 9, the following enigmatical statement, keeping the author's definition of the term in view: 'The spirit is life-principle, and when taken from the life (soul) itself, it dies with the body.' Just whether the 'life' dies with the body, or the life principle dies with the breath of life and the body. Which one dies or whether they all die together no living man can tell from the sentence, and it is probable the sentence is as clear as the subject was in the mind of the author. If the soul dies, then life itself dies. So it comes to pass that we have the astonishing phenomenon of dead life or living death. If the spirit dies, then it is the life principle, or the very essence of life that dies, and this is a calamity worse than the other. But the author says spirit means breath. Then when the Divine record says, 'God is a spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth,' it means to say, 'God is a breath, and those who worship him must worship him in breath and in truth.' This is simply ridiculous. But the first page of the tract says, 'God never talks nonsense.' It is not the author's fault if He does not.

If the soul means 'life' and spirit, life 'principle,' as the author says, and life, or the 'soul' dies, and the 'spirit' or life principle does not die, but goes to God, then it transpires, according to the tract, that these 'immortalists' are not such idiots and heretics after all, as there is a part of man, and that the most essential part, viz. his very life principle that is deathless. So after all, the author is an immortalist advocate too, and is only giving his 'larnin' on the subject an airing, to show the brethren their mistake as to the particular part of man that does not go into unconsciousness at death. But this is not all. The tract makes the remarkable discovery that the new birth, the being made a new creature, does not take place till the resurrection. Paul then was mistaken when he addressed his brethren as being 'in Christ,' while yet living, and was anti-christian and playing into the hands of Satan in saying any man in Christ is a new creature. Then too, Christ was all at sea when he told Nicodemus that regeneration is of 'earthly things' and is consummated by a birth of 'water and spirit.' But perhaps we are all mistaken and a birth of water baptism is not really to take place till the resurrection. Then too, the statement that God's word is 'spirit and is life' only means 'it is breath and soul,' or 'life principle and life,' so life principle and 'life,' or birth and soul usually 'go dead' without a body what is the body of the word of God that keeps its spirit (breath) and life (soul) alive? If the word of God has no body, but has spirit and soul or breath and life, which the tract says is all the same. Then soul and spirit can live and do live independent of a body and are immortal, eternal and undying in the very nature of the case.

These paragraphs are not penned in the spirit of irony or levity, but in all seriousness to show the absurd interpretations of scriptural terms and teaching, and the ridiculous light in which the tract places its author in the estimation of accurate and careful thinkers and theologians.

His frequent use of Old Testament proof texts to prove his position on the question only serves to show that he has not critically read the Bible. Life and Immortality were *brought to light through the gospel*. Immortality existed as a fact, but was unrevealed to the Old Testament authors to them it was a hidden truth. All they knew upon the subject was but speculative and fragmentary. Thus it was that the Saducees said 'There are neither angels nor spirits;' were materialistic in their views and said a man's thoughts and all perish in the grave. In the grave is forgetfulness.' 'Of course there is no memory in the grave' said the Pharisee for the mind, the spirit or thinking powers does not go into the grave, but lives and thinks on. Pharisees said there *are* angels and spirits. When Christ came *he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*. He selected his disciples from among the Pharisees. He was known to be in sympathy with the Pharisee on this subject of angels and spirits and the endless nature of life. This is evidenced by the Saducees pestering him with questions the same as they did the Pharisees. No Pharisees could have heard his reply to the Saducees 'that which' Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are dead to men they are alive to God without feeling that the Great Teacher was *enrapport* with him and his sect upon the subject. Then too the 'parable' of Dives and Lazarus, the transfiguaration upon the mount in which Moses was seen, His explanation to the disciples after his resurrection in the 'upper chamber, in Jerusalem, of the difference between his resurrected body and a spirit,—that it was composed of *flesh and bones*, which a spirit had neither—all shows that he was a Pharisee in the one particular dogma of the intermediate state. Where is a sane man that will read the New Testament and say that the Saducees ever felt Christ to be anything but their strong opponent on that one subject? Then hear Paul, long after his conversion still claming to be a Pharisee, and speaking of being absent, in conscious existence, from the body and present with the Lord. Of a man being able either in the body or out of it to ascend into the third heaven and see things unutterable, and say he was a 'Soul sleeper' which is only another name for Saducee, and I say you are either wonderfully blinded or astonishingly unlearned. Read what the Apostle Peter says Christ did while his body was in the grave—'preached to the spirits in prison—and the last chapter in Revelations of the prophet (dead in body)—who revealed the new Jerusalem to John, then go and talk the mortality of the 'Soul' to the wind but do not pester Christians with it lest men laugh at your dullness and loose respect for your biblical learning.

3rd. I do not think it necessary to review the tract because it teaches that man without Christ is no more than an ox, a monkey, or an ass and is in his organism only matter and subject to the unalterable and invariable forces that control and regulate the action of matter, and as therefore, not a free agent as the Bible teaches, but is purely the victim of physical forces. His soul as the life of the body, the spirit is the breath, and the mind therefore is an organization of matter which grows only as the brain grows, and these along with the body grow and act only as the irresistible and unalterable forces of nature compel them to grow and act. We have grown out of that sort of childishness both in theology and science, and a reply would only be a waste of time. But now I see the Editor of the EVANGELIST has disposed of the question in a very summary way. He sent out cards asking misleading questions, received about forty answers from the more than 250 ministers of the church, which he published. Sixteen of these are 'Soul-sleepers.' Twenty are not and four do not know what they are. Therefore the 'Church does not believe in the Immortality of the Soul. If sixteen preachers who are unlearned on the subject—and these sixteen represent the 'Soul-sleeper' strength of the church are *the church*, then what on earth are the rest of us? I wish to say just here to Swihart, Garber and the rest that 98-100 of the Brethren church are men and women who do believe in the endless nature of life, and will not allow the soul-sleepers among them to preach advocate and promulgate their views publicly as a part of our faith. We have no objections to their holding their own private opinions on the subject, but the making of it an issue, publishing preaching advocating and abetting it will be met with resistless force. No one wants to make it a test of fellowship, as it is only an error in theory and is of too little value to allow the peace of the church to be disturbed by its advocacy. We have not raised the issue, and do not want it agitated. The out side have raised it, and we meet it just this far. If they wish to drop the foolish and unsaving issue and go on with the church in preaching the gospel to men and telling the story that will convict and convert all right. If not and the EVANGELIST is to be made the vehicle of advocacy for that school, and the Publishing House the manufactory of tracts all Bro. Garber need do is to say so and we will know how to act. We are getting entirely too smart. As soon as we get one piece of folly settled and one wild doctrinal sensation quieted down another comes up, and in some way the Publishing House gets mixed up in it, every time. We think none of the less of these brethren for their faith. As they read the Bible they will get over it, but we do say and say it plainly it will be wise to drop it and do so at once. As I am the 'Champion' mentioned in lasts weeks EVANGELIST, I deem it but proper that these remarks be made.

If we are going to preach the gospel to save souls, are going to be practical and become men of God relegating all sensationalism and wild theories to the school of dreamers, then I am soul and heart in the work. But if this is to continue then I have one more effort to make and will close the chapter. No man in the church ever talked of making the 'Soul-sleeping' faith a test of fellowship, but the man who rides it as a hobby will loose his influence and loose it for good, and with this loss will loose much opportunity for doing good. May God in his mercy guide us so as to make us only a power for good.

S. H. BASHOR.

THE EVANGELIST will be sent to any address till Jan. 1st, 1890, for 75 cents. Make up a club in your church at once.

All Ladies Are Interested.

The following letter shows very clearly how well satisfied those are who buy their silk dresses of O. S. Chaffee & Son, Mansfield Centre, Conn. Our readers will remember this firm manufacture silk and satin goods and sell direct from their great factory to buyers, saving all intermediate expenses:

Office of BIBLICAL RECORDER,
RALEIGH, N. C.,
December 17, 1888.

MESSRS O. S. CHAFFEE & SON:

Dear Sirs.—The package of silk for my wife came safely and soundly to hand today. She is delighted with it and pleased that you were so prompt and generous with her. I highly appreciate the compliment myself, and enclose check for the $25.50. With very best wishes,

C. T. BAILEY.

Send your name and address on a postal card to O. S. Chaffee & Son, Mansfield Centre, Conn. They will mail you samples of silk and full descriptive circulars free.

WHEN a pant-hunter pantless is panting for pants,

HE pants for the best pants the pant-market grants,

HE panteth unpanted until he implants

HIMSELF in a pair of our Plymouth Rock Pants.

TO OBTAIN the Famous Custom-made **Plymouth Rock $3. $4 and $5 Pants,** first send **6 cents,** for which we will mail you **20** samples, self-measurement blanks, and linen tape measure, **provided you** MENTION THIS PAPER, or if you cannot wait for samples, tell us about the color preferred, with **waist, inside leg,** and **hip** measures, remit $3, together with 35 cents to cover cost of expressage or postage, and we will forward the goods prepaid to any address in the U. S., guaranteeing safe delivery and entire satisfaction or money refunded. **Remember,** also, that we make to your order, Full Suits, $13.25, $16.75, $20.50; Overcoats, $12.50; and that for any cause we refund money at buyer's request, upon return of goods, or make alterations or new garments *free of extra charge.*

PLYMOUTH ROCK PANTS CO.
Address all mail to
10 ELIOT STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

BRANCH OFFICES—285 Broadway, New York; Burnside Building, Worcester, Mass.; Gilmore House, Springfield, Mass.; 60 Market St., Lynn, Mass.; Butler's Exchange, Providence, R. I.; Old Register Building, New Haven, Conn. 943 Penn. Ave., Washington.

Any one wishing to learn of our responsibility, may write the American Express Company, at Boston (capital $20,000,000), or consult the commercial agencies

---

Consumption Cured.

An old phpsician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis Catarrh, Asthma, and all throat and lung affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous debility and all Nervous Complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge, to all who desire it, this recipe, in German, French or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper. W. A. NOYES, 149 Power's Block, Rochester, N.Y.

EVERY LADY WANTS A SILK DRESS.

This is your opportunity. **A new departure.** SILKS direct from the manufacturers to **you.** Our reduced prices bring the best goods within reach of all. We are the only manufacturers in the U. S. selling **direct to consumers.** You take no risk. We warrant every piece of goods as represented, or money refunded. See our references. We are the oldest Silk Manufacturers in the U.S. Established in 1838, with over 50 years experience.

We guarantee the **CHAFFEE DRESS SILKS,** for richness of color, superior finish and wearing qualities, to be **unexcelled by any make of Black Silks in the World.** We offer these Dress Silks in Gros Grains, Satins, Surahs, Faille Francaise and Aida Cloths, in Blacks only. We send to all parts of the U. S. It will cost you only a **postal card** to see for yourselves. Send a postal and we will forward you **SAMPLES FREE** with prices.

O. S. CHAFFEE & SON,
Mansfield Centre, Conn.

Refer, by permission, to First National Bank, Windham National Bank, Dime Savings Bank, Willimantic Savings Institute, of Willimantic, Conn.

Recollect with each Dress Pattern we present the buyer with 1000 Yards of Sewing Silk, and enough Silk Braid to bind bottom of dress.

THE GOODS ALL CARRYING
CHARGES PREPAID

There is some satisfaction in FARMING

when a farm produces a good living, a handsome profit and at the same time is making its owner rich by increase in value of land on account of growth of towns, building railroads, and influx of settlers; in no part of the country is this so true as of **Michigan Farms.** Soil is very rich, best of markets near at hand, no destructive blizzards, cyclones, but health, fine farms, good society, and a home and fortune can be had. Address, **O. M. BARNES,** Land Commissioner, Lansing, Mich.

ROYAL

BAKING POWDER

Absolutely Pure.

This powder never varies. A marvel of purity, strength and wholesomeness. More economical than the ordinary kinds, and cannot be sold in competition with the multitude of low test, short weight alum or phosphate powders. SOLD ONLY IN CANS, ROYAL BAKING POWDER CO., 106 Wall St., New York.

"Best cure for colds, cough, consumption is the old Vegetable Pulmonary Balsam." Cutler Bros. & Co., Boston. *For $1 a large bottle sent prepaid.*

THE PROPHETIC AGE.

The initial number of THE PROPHETIC AGE, a new monthly devoted to a study of the Prophecies, the Kingdom of God, and the Millennium, has been issued. Send your subscription, 50 cents a year, six months, 25 cents, single number, 5 cents. Published at the Brethren Pub. House, Ashland, O.

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

Scripturally examined and found wanting. A tract that all want to read.

Death and the Resurrection briefly but intelligently presented by the teaching of the Bible.

BY ELD. J. H. SWIHART.

A pamphlet of 16 pages, well printed and covered.

PRICE, ten cents by mail, or three for 25 cents.

AGENTS WANTED.

Address the Author, or
THE BRETHREN PUB. HOUE,
Ashland, Ohio.

QUICK TIME,

VIA ERIE RAILWAY FOR

New York, Albany, Boston, Pittsburg and Other Eastern Cities.

Forms the great through and picturesque route between the

EAST AND WEST.

No change of cars between New York, Chicago, Cincinnati and St. Louis. The only road running solid trains to New York.

Before purchasing tickets, address W. W. Dunnavant, D. P. A., Warren, O., or J. B. Brinton, Agt., Ashland, O

Time Table taking effect Dec. 23, 1888

EASTWARD.

7:12 A. M., No. 12, daily, Atlantic Express, for Elmira, Philadelphia, Albany, Boston and New York. Pullman buffet sleeping coaches for Albany, Boston and New York without change.

2:20 P. M., No. 6, daily, St. Louis Limited for Jamestown, Hornellsville, Elmira, Binghamton and New York. Pullman buffet sleeping coaches for New York.

12:27 A. M., No. 8, daily, New York Express, for Jamestown, Hornellsville, Elmira, Philadelphia and New York Pullman buffet sleeping coach to New York, and Pullman buffet drawing room coach from Hornellsville.

9:19 A. M., No. 38, daily except Sunday, Galion to Kent, stopping at all stations.

WESTWARD.

1:07 P. M., No. 5, daily, Chicago and St. Louis Limited. Pullman buffet sleeping coach to Chicago, Cincinnati and St. Louis without change.

8:57 P. M., No. 3, daily, Pacific Express, Pullman buffet sleeping coach for Chicago, also Pullman sleeper for Cincinnati.

8:44 A. M., No. 7, daily except Sunday, Kent to Galion, stopping at all stations with connections for Columbus

2:20 P. M., No. 37, daily except Sunday, Kent to Galion, with connections for Columbus, stopping at all stations.

W. C. Rinerson, Ass. Gen. Passenger Agent, Cleveland, O.
E. B. Thomas, Second Vice President, Cleveland, Ohio.

BEFORE YOU BUY A BICYCLE

Of any kind, send stamp to **GUMP BRO.** Dayton, Ohio, for large illustrated Price List of **New and Second-Hand Machines.**